



PROGRESSIVE NEWS UPDATE – March 29th, 2001

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QUOTE OF THE DAY

“I never even considered the mining industry in the arsenic decision. It may sound very naive, but I didn't even know they were one of the biggest producers.”

- EPA Administrator Christie Todd Whitman - the highest ranking environmental official in the United States - on the repeal of arsenic water quality safety standards

SUMMARIES

1. BIG BUSINESS BRACING FOR TAX FEEDING FRENZY (news)

"In the competition for business tax breaks, sometimes it takes campaign dollars to get an edge. Lobbyists for corporations and trade associations already are vying for advantage when Congress and the White House eventually turn to business-tax issues. The drive is reflected in the appeals being made for various preferential write-off periods by special interests ranging from big retailers to high-tech companies."

Wall Street Journal, Hitt, 3/29

<http://interactive.wsj.com/articles/SB985816037806821896.htm>

2. BUSH BUCKLING TO PRESSURE FOR TRIGGER ON TAX CUT (news)

"President Bush today delivered an unmistakable signal to moderates that their concerns about the size of his \$1.6 trillion, 10-year tax cut have begun to weigh on him, indicating for the first time he is willing to consider some way to tie the tax cut to actual surpluses in the outyears of his plan. Several Senate moderates, including members of Bush's own party."

CongressDaily, Koffler, 3/29

<http://www.nationaljournal.com>

3. BUSH: I WILL NEVER CONTROL ENERGY PRICES NO MATTER HOW HIGH THEY GO (news)

"President Bush vowed Tuesday never to impose price controls on energy, sending a strong signal to consumers, Congress and the energy markets that the rules of supply and demand would prevail -- even if it means dramatically higher energy prices."

CNN, Garrett, 3/29

<http://www.cnn.com/2001/ALLPOLITICS/03/28/bush.energy/index.html>

4. GETTING CLOSER AND CLOSER TO OPENING UP ALASKA (news)

"Bush also appeared to acknowledge the difficulty he may face in moving through Congress his plan to open the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to energy exploration, emphasizing other options for tapping new energy resources even while insisting he "strongly" backs opening ANWR. "I think it's important for us to open up ANWR," Bush said. "Whether or not the Congress sees it that way is another matter." Bush said Interior Secretary Norton is looking at "all lands that are not to be fully protected" to see if they contain exploitable energy sources and that the United States is working to devise ways to tap natural gas in Canada and Mexico."

CongressDaily, Koffler, 3/29

<http://www.nationaljournal.com>

5. THE REAL MOTIVE FOR THE GOP IS TO CONSUME MORE ENERGY, NOT LESS (editorial)

"The scary truth on energy policy is that the president and his merry band of former energy merchants don't want the typical American to consume less oil, coal and natural gas, but more."

Atlanta Journal Constitution, Editorial Board, 3/29

http://www.accessatlanta.com/partners/ajc/epaper/editions/today/opinion_a32c5d3363f3104f1052.html

6. BUSH ON 'SEARCH-AND-DESTROY' MISSION ON ENVIRO POLICY (news)

"Angry over policies they see as harmful to the public and the environment, Democrats and environmentalists Wednesday demanded the Bush administration halt what they called a "search-and-destroy" mission on environmental protections. "It is a weekly, and now daily, drumbeat of rollbacks of hard-fought and hard-won progress to protect the air and the water and the wilderness and the environment of this country," said Rep. Richard Gephardt, D-Missouri. "This is the most alarming rollback in environmental efforts that we have ever seen."

CNN, 3/29

<http://www.cnn.com/2001/ALLPOLITICS/03/28/environment.democrat/index.html>

7. INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY OUTRAGED OVER BUSH'S LATEST ENVIRO SNUB (news)

"Europeans reacted sharply Thursday to President George W. Bush's repudiation of the Kyoto global warming treaty, with France denouncing it as a scandal and an alarmed European Union announcing it would send top-ranking representatives to Washington. French Environment Minister Dominique Voynet said: "Mr Bush's unilateral attitude is a scandal." His behaviour was "entirely provocative and irresponsible," she added. The European Commission announced in Brussels it will send a delegation to Washington next week for talks with the Bush administration. Italy's Environment Minister Willer Bordon called the US move "extremely serious"."

Agence France Presse, 3/29

<http://www.commondreams.org/headlines01/0329-01.htm>

8. WITH INTERNATIONAL MEETING LOOMING, U.S. HAS NO ENVIRO POLICY (news)

"With an international meeting of environment officials scheduled to begin on Thursday, the United States will be in the position of having no policy on global warming, which will be the main issue at the gathering. The Bush administration reconfirmed today that it opposed the Kyoto Protocol, the international treaty to fight global warming, and would not submit it for Senate ratification."

New York Times, Jehl, 3/29

<http://www.nytimes.com/2001/03/29/science/29WARM.html>

9. ADMINISTRATION BACKPEDALING ON ARSENIC (news)

“President Bush said Thursday he will pursue some reduction in the amount of arsenic allowed in drinking water, but not before more scientific studies on where the level should be set. Bush defended his decision to withdraw new arsenic regulations issued by President Clinton in the final days of his administration.”

Associated Press, Heilprin, 3/29

<http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/national/AP-Arsenic-Water.html>

10. GOP LEADERSHIP KILLS BIPARTISAN ELECTION REFORM EFFORTS (news)

“Prospects for a bipartisan task force on election reform fizzled yesterday, as House leaders acknowledged they had failed to reach a compromise on the sensitive political issue. House Republicans and Democrats had been trying for weeks to establish a select committee charged with investigating problems in the voting system. But Republicans remained steadfast that they deserved a one-vote edge on any such panel, while Democrats demanded parity.”

Washington Post, Eilperin, 3/29

<http://washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A8606-2001Mar28.html>

11. WELFARE REFORM HITS REALITY AS ECONOMY SLOWS (news)

“Since Congress and President Bill Clinton ended "welfare as we know it" in 1996, hundreds of thousands of Americans have moved from the dole into jobs. Some politicians, in fact, have declared welfare reform an unqualified success. But rough times could lie ahead for many low-wage workers because of changes in the welfare law that drew little attention during the recent go-go economy. If the economic slowdown continues and drives up unemployment, many thousands of low-income workers could fall back into a federal welfare system that now cuts off people after five years and limits payments to states no matter how many poor residents they have.”

Washington Post, Babington, 3/29

<http://washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A7644-2001Mar28.html>